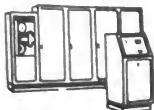


INTERRUPT

15

newsletter of
computer people for peace

may, 1971



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5 CPP SESSIONS AT SJCC

AFIPS YIELDS

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ATTEND OUR SESSIONS

TUESDAY, MAY 18

- DATA BANKS - THE RIGHT TO BE UNLISTED (3 - 5pm)
- CPP OPEN MEETING (5 - 7pm)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19

- MINORITY GROUPS AND WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRY (9:30 - 11:30am)
- MASS RALLY AGAINST THE MISUSE OF TECHNOLOGY (noon)
- COMPUTERS AND THE MILITARY (2 - 5pm)

THURSDAY, MAY 20

- UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE RIGHT TO WORK (9:30 - 11:30 am)
- HEALTH SYSTEMS (2 - 4pm)

All sessions to be held at Convention Hall, Atlantic City

INTERRUPT

NEWSLETTER OF COMPUTER
PEOPLE FOR PEACE

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NO "GOOD" WORK ?

People in the computer field have been disturbed for many years by the anti-social and non-social uses to which computers are frequently put, and have tried to seek out the positive uses of computers.

To help in this C.P.P. organized a discussion at its March 31 general meeting on "The Positive Uses of Computers--Are There Any?". Guest speakers were Barry Gordon, chairman of New York ACM, and Dan McCracken, noted author of computer texts.

Mr. Gordon proposed a number of uses which he considered positive: medical data banks, pollution studies, and urban renewal studies. At the end of his talk, though, he pointed out that computers are not now regularly used for these purposes, that at present these are only potential good uses. The reason for this, he said, is that computer priorities are determined primarily by profitability rather than social use.

Rather than pursue this point--why computers are not in fact used for good purposes--a number of people in the audience chose to question and attack the good uses Gordon mentioned, especially the medical data bank. One person asked if medical data related to psychological problems would be put in the data bank records, forever to follow and mark an individual. Another questioned whether potential employers, insurance investigators, etc. would or could be kept from access to the data.

Dan McCracken, upset by the attitudes of the audience, did not suggest other positive uses (except, in passing, their use to improve subway service). Rather

he attacked attitudes expressed by members of the audience, arguing that the problem was that those present were unable or unwilling to judge shades of gray. "No use of computers is good underlined, capital G," he said. All are imbedded in a society that has faults. However, in context, use of computers for Blue Cross billing, etc. are "more good than bad."

People argued with McCracken, but the need which the meeting was called to deal with was not met by the discussion. For whether the suggested uses of computers were reasonably good, as suggested by the speakers, or only marginally good, as suggested by members of the audience, almost all agreed that these uses were not widely practiced now.

Why this is so was not discussed at any length during the evening. This reporter and many C.P.P. members feel that C.P.P. must address itself to this most important question.

peace

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doubt their sincerity, most welcome the "doves" support for a peace movement led by the people.

• Spirited away to the heights of the Colorado mountains, the "White House" Conference on Youth ignored President Nixon's plans and supported the People's Peace Treaty.



As this newsletter goes to print, the People Coalition for Peace and Justice and the Mayday Collective are planning two weeks of massive non-violent civil disobedience in Washington. Organized on the premise that the war against the poor and the blacks can not be separated from the war against the Vietnamese people, the Coalition demands \$6500 per year income for a family of four and the release of all political prisoners. CPP is one of the organizations under the umbrella of the People's Coalition.

The struggle is not over. U.S. technology continues to kill thousands every month. The CPP activities at the Spring Joint Computer Conference will be another step in the Movement's Spring Offensive.

DEATH BY AUTOMATION

Have you wondered what those three antennae sticking up out of the ground are for? Or what strange blossoms the trees have sprouted? Have you become used to turning up little black and gray boxes with nothing written on them? I am describing a part of what has come to be known as the "Electronic Battlefield", the computerized fire control system which exists in Indo-China now. The anonymous little boxes should have tags reading "Made in USA" since America claims to be so proud of its technological innovations. Instead, all that exists for the most part is a white-wash "Investigation" by Armed Services Committee Senators.

It is no easy matter to cull information about the electronic battlefield. Even those of us alerted and interested in finding out about contracts and usage must dig in the dark. I want to let you know that in our research booklet, which will be available at the SJCC (May 18-20), we are going to do our best to enlighten you. (This is a plug. Come.) There will be printed and human testimony regarding this and other aspects of the US disengagement. Or rather, proof of the untruth of such claims.

Our commitment will not end at the SJCC. We will continue to unearth the facts and raw experiences you should know about so that you will join us in our demand for immediate withdrawal of American troops and, equally important, a full and immediate withdrawal of all American technological instruments of war.

CPP hopes to solidify its valid reasons for this urgent position, so that we will all understand just what is being done to the Vietnamese and ourselves, at our expense, by policy makers, both corporate and governmental.

The electronic battlefield could not exist without computers - that is why we must alert workers in the field, as well as the American public, of its existence.

We will explain in depth the role individuals in the military/industrial corporate structure play in government policy. Examples are Roy Ash, Tex Thornton, Watson, Jr., etc. The corporations we will touch upon first are in much, much deeper than the "electronic battlefield." Their military contracts that cover a wide range must be uncovered. Cost overrun is much more insidious than the selling by the President. It can be safely stated that money appropriated anywhere in Defense stays there. Amounts less than \$5 million do not even have to be accounted for.

A General Accounting Office Special Report on defense contracts involving a detailed study of 146 completed contracts of 37 companies totalling \$4,256,000,000 found that pretax profits as a return on total capital amounted to 28.3%, return on equity capital 56.1%. The government report said, "the higher the costs the higher the profits," because most Pentagon contracts are on a "cost plus" basis. The 56.1% profit figure is three times the annual rate for all manufacturing corporations.

One more thing, in this sneak preview. Official reports admit over \$21 billion has been spent developing the Electronic Battlefield. In the first paragraph, I outline the outlandish image of the gadgets that participate (known as sensors) as if we could actually be touched by them. We already are. From the same investigation: "The US Border Patrol is currently using sensors developed under Defense Communications Planning Group (DCPG, created by Sec-

Continued on Page 4

"General Westmoreland explained... 'I see battlefields or combat areas that are under 24-hour real or near-real time surveillance of all types. I see battlefields on which we can destroy anything we locate through instant communications and almost instantaneous application of highly lethal firepower... No more than 10 years should separate us from the automated battlefield.'"

- "Electronic Battlefield, Inc.", Motive magazine, February 1971. (Supplied by NARMIC)

Continued from Page 3

retary of Defense without authority from anyone) auspices to monitor selected portions of the border of the continental United States. The Border Patrol has been able to apprehend and turn back more persons attempting to enter the US illegally by using sensors as a complement to, or in place of, its regular patrols. Operational and technical information resulting from the Border Patrol operations is expected to help DCPG in improving sensors and operational techniques."

Further, "Friendly foreign governments have also expressed interest in sensors. Canada, the United Kingdom, and other NATO countries have been given documents and briefings which describe our equipment and its tactical applications." Bear in mind who those other friendly countries are: Greece, Turkey, Portugal, Spain.

The only good news (or is it very bad is how unsuccessful these gadgets are. Remember the chaos a computer (with the help or hindrance of human friends) contributes to our civilian world?

Which brings us to our civilian world our unemployed (you or your friends?), our starving multi-millions (people, not dollars), the collapse of our services, our rising prices, in short: our total neglect. Our cities are bankrupt. Economic collapse surrounds us. And this during a war economy (we have three separate wars overtly going on right now). Next time you hear our political government "Leaders" telling you about how they care and what they are doing for us, think about just what they are doing for us...or more precisely, to us.

by Ann Rosenberg

Computers and the military !

The role of corporations in the war !

Electronic battlefields (by the Viet Nam vets who installed them) !

Come to the CPP session on the military and computer technology

How can we as an industry take action to curb the military use of technology?

May 19 2pm to 5pm

CPP joined the demonstration in Central Park on Saturday, April 3, in commemoration of the assassination of Martin Luther King.

We set up a literature table and attracted quite a lot of attention from the weekend crowds passing through.



The Past

Two years ago in Boston CPP disrupted an SJCC panel titled "Urgent - Increased Dialogue with Society", demanding that the conference take up urgent issues - the war, racism, misuse of technology, etc.

We were a minority then - people thought us rude, some agreed with our goals but disagreed with our tactics, others called us kids and dismissed us as being overzealous - and the great majority didn't seem to care.

But CPP did care - we came back to both Fall and Spring Joint Conferences. We always felt that there were people who could be reached, people who were concerned about the abuses of our technology, people who, through collective action, could make a difference in the course of history.

The Present

We return once more - this time after six months of letters, demands, telephone calls, negotiations, meetings and press releases. Our demand for participation in the SJCC'71 conference has been met. CPP has organized, and SJCC has accepted, five additional sessions to be held in Convention Hall, during prime time and under the sponsorship of SJCC.

Having the sessions on Data Banks, Racism & Sexism, the Military, Unemployment and Health is a major accomplishment. It sets a precedent so that we can expect all future conferences of technical people to give as much time to the social and political aspects of technology as to the technical aspects.

The Conference

CPP will use the sessions in several ways:

- to present a radical analysis of our economic, social and political system.
We hope to have several pamphlets written for SJCC on Data Banks, the Military, Health and Housing.
- to restructure conferences by involving all members of the computer community (programmers and key punch operators will play a major role).
- to restructure conferences by involving the total audience in participation.
CPP is holding its sessions in as unstructured a way as possible. There won't be long boring papers and ALL points of view are encouraged. AFIPS is cooperating with us in opening parts of the conference to the public.
- to end the talk and begin to act. CPP feels that a conference, however socially relevant, must develop an ongoing program of action. We hope that people will leave the conference with more awareness of what must be done and some commitment to do it.

Act Now

This is where CPP is at. We urge all members and friends to come to Atlantic City to take part in the conference. (Ask your company to pay - they claim to be for progress.) Students can register for only \$5 and CPP can provide some housing facilities for the unemployed veterans of the computer industry.

If you can't make the trip, send money - we need it to pay off our \$2000 debt, incurred in organizing for the conference. Remember, CPP's program will not be financed by the corporations which finance SJCC. Join CPP or contribute to help in our mutual struggle against war, discrimination, exploitation and the misuse of technology, and for the liberation of all men and women.

Technology for the People !

KAFKA REVISITED

A bland bureaucratic indifference to people's legitimate fears, and the assumption of an inherent right to determine what is best for the less privileged mass--this is what impressed us most about the senior government functionaries testifying at the data banks hearings. Several New York CPP members went to Washington to participate in the hearings before the Senate Sub-Committee on Constitutional Rights; we had to content ourselves with listening as permission to testify was denied us. We did submit the CPP policy statement on data banks to be read into the Congressional Record, however.

William Rehnquist, Assistant Attorney-General, and Richard Velde, Associate Administrator of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, read their statements and answered questions put to them by Senators Ervin and Hruska.

Rehnquist's line was that it is within the constitutionally defined province of the Federal Department of Justice to use all means necessary to prevent "crime" (which he never quite defined). The Department would "vigorously oppose any legislation which, whether by opening the door to unnecessary and unmanageable judicial supervision of such activities or otherwise, would effectively impair this extraordinarily important function of the Federal government".

Our favorite piece of "Catch 22" logic came from Rehnquist when Sen. Ervin asked if he agreed that government surveillance of people exercising their right to peaceful assembly might intimidate them. "No," he said, citing as evidence that the people who claimed to be upset by this sort of surveillance had taken legal action against the government

A Day At The
Constitutional Rights Hearings

(whereas, if they were truly intimidated, they wouldn't dare). And obviously, no one else was intimidated because they hadn't complained.

Velde talked about Project SEARCH, a pilot project in cooperation between several states to develop a computerized system of compatible criminal history records. This study had convinced LEAA that a nationwide SEARCH system would make it "routine to find a person's complete criminal history with no more information than a driver's licence number. We wish this sort of effort and funding were put into systems to guarantee people of their rights to welfare and unemployment benefits, housing, etc.

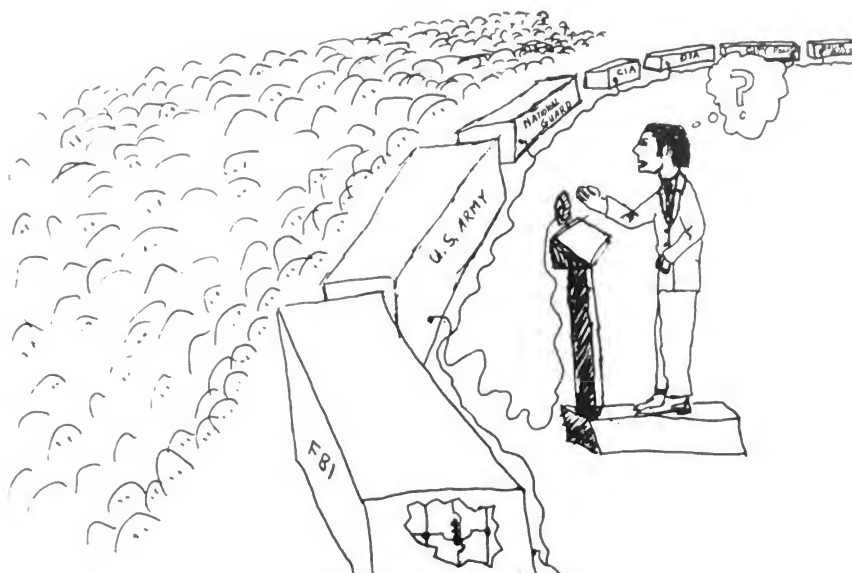
LEAA funds are helping several states develop "information systems related to civil disorders. Most of these systems have as their objective either tension detection and forecasting or providing support to tactical units." Velde said this was in line with the recommendations of the Kerner Commission. It struck us as typical that the only suggestions the government took up were those few that could justify depriving citizens of their rights, choosing to ignore most of the Commission's report (which was an indictment of institutional racism in the U.S., and recommended means whereby equal rights could be extended to all the citizens of the country).

Velde assured us that various committees had been established to institute security and privacy safeguards. The privacy of the members of these committees, at least, is assured, for he never told us what they were, how they were qualified

to deal with these problems, nor in whose interests they were acting.

Both men agreed it was imperative to gather information on persons and organizations, by whatever means available (we hope their junior assistants enjoy reading "Interrupt")

in cases where a "crime" was likely to be committed. When a government is so concerned about the imminent "criminality" of so many of its citizens, we maintain that the legitimacy of that government and its conception of law and order merit more surveillance than does the populace.



To find out what's happening with local CPP groups or to help establish one, get in touch with our local contact.

Boston: Terry Winograd
119 Harvard Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

Chicago: Andrew Friedland
1132 Drummond Place
Chicago, Ill. 60614

Detroit: Andy Schoene
5440 Cass Avenue, #608
Detroit, Mich. 48202

Houston: Ken Thomson
3320 A Norfolk
Houston, Texas 77006

Los Angeles: Ken Ziedman
2342 Penmar
Venice, Ca. 90291

Philadelphia: David Spector
209 N. 36th Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19104

Poughkeepsie: Don Zitz
18 Hudson View Drive
Beacon, New York 12508

San Francisco: Sheldon Ellish
11 Ridgewood Avenue
San Francisco, Ca. 94112

Wash., D.C.: Sidney Kulick
1316 Fenwick Lane
Silver Springs, Md. 20910

Northern N.J.: Michael L. Kuras
M-13, 100 Vail Road
Parsippany, N. J. 07054

Southern Fla.: John Delaney
c/o Chapbook
P.O. Box 319
Coconut Grove, Fla. 33133



TESTIMONY BEFORE S

I. The Computer and Civil Liberties

● COMPUTERS ARE A THREAT TO PRIVACY

As computer technicians, we in Computer People for Peace have the responsibility to inform the public of misuses and dangerous applications of computers. As citizens we fully understand the public's fear of computers and feel that much of that fear is well-grounded. We stand the threats to privacy presented by the speedier distribution of information made possible by technology.

● THERE ARE NO TECHNICAL SAFEGUARDS

Because we work in the computer field we know that there are no software or hardware constraints which can be incorporated in any system to make it foolproof. All technical safeguards built into computer systems such as keywords, scrambled indexing and limited access, must be designed and implemented by people, and therefore may be "cracked" or decoded by others with an interest to do so.

In no way could we abdicate our responsibility to the public by making them believe that we could technically design data bank systems which could offer them the protections they need. The solution must rest with the people and the enforcement mechanisms they devise; it cannot rest in the computer industry, although the industry must take responsibility for its actions.

● RESPONSIBILITY OF DATA REQUIRED

Some have suggested that in order to secure more controllable computer systems, programmers and other systems personnel be licensed. We have seen that the Army and its data processing staff, which is well-controlled and under security clearance, has violated our rights. Who is to license those who license? We do not believe that licensing in any way purifies or isolates the problem of data banks. We do feel, however, that the problem should be tackled from the standpoint of "responsibility of data". In government as well as private industry, an individual or group of individuals in charge of a project should be held accountable in a court of law for violations of our rights of privacy.

● OBLIGATION OF TECHNICIANS TO THE PUBLIC

The computer field, which has led the way in efficiency methods, has intensified the issue of dehumanization. Many of us who are programmers, operators and systems analysts know little if anything about the end product or value of our work. As citizens we feel that we must have more of a say in the type of work we do. As technicians we feel that it is imperative that our responsibility be to the public, not to our corporate employers.

II. The Government and Civil Liberties

● BILL OF RIGHTS MUST BE ENFORCED

The computer has brought the problem of data banks and individual privacy to a head, but it is in no way the sole culprit. The computer makes it easier to collect and distribute information at speeds which were a few years ago inconceivable. It is therefore necessary for the people to insure protection from their government by more rigorously enforcing the Bill of Rights.

SENATE DATA BANK HEARINGS

Although this document was written almost two hundred years ago it offers concepts which are still viable. The First and Fourth Amendments explicitly grant us the right of personal privacy. Data accumulated about a citizen must fall under the same safeguards as the rights of the citizens themselves.

• THE GOVERNMENT HAS VIOLATED ITS OWN LAWS

Given a government which has frequently violated its own laws (as shown by the Army intelligence operations, the passport lists, and other data banks brought out in the Senate hearings), it is not more laws that we seek, but enforcement of existing safeguards.

We need not be legal experts to see that additional laws can only muddle the thinking of the Bill of Rights which contains all the information we need to solve this problem. The "freedom of Information Act" attempted to define "public information" to benefit the people. In practice, however, it has become an example of the infringement of additional laws on our basic rights. Through this act, many agencies have justified continuing a policy of selling information (such as census data) under what we believe to be the misguided concept that information can be sold to the public for money.

Information about an individual should be considered his or her own property and be available to others only upon release by the person involved. In no way should dollar values be attached to the invasion of an individual's privacy.

• PEOPLES RESEARCH BODY NEEDED

In order to enforce our rights more rigorously, we think it necessary to create a People's Research Body. This body should be composed of individuals from consumer interest organizations, legal rights groups, citizens interest committees and workers from the computer field. It should remain apart from the government so that it may involve itself in objective research into infractions of our rights of privacy by the government. The research performed by this body should result in indictments which can then be brought before a court of law.

In the past we have seen regulatory agencies grow into bureaucratic nightmares, resulting in the creation of more problems than they solve. In order to avoid this tendency, we urge that the People's Research Body be limited in power and composed of lay citizens who will serve in terms of no more than one year, selected in a manner similar to jury service.

• DATA DISARMAMENT TEAMS NECESSARY

In addition Data Disarmament Teams should be established to follow up court-mandated destruction of existing data banks. In instances in the past, like the Fort Holabird files, court-mandated destruction of data banks has resulted in the erasure of computer tape files while the original input data on computer keypunch cards was maintained.

• INDICTMENTS MUST BE BROUGHT

We fully realize that our suggestions place a great deal of faith in an already overworked and often inconsistent judiciary system. We must accept this as an interim measure. The government must give us a sign of faith by proving that it is serious

CONCLUDED

We enthusiastically support legal cases now being brought against the government by individuals and groups concerned with our privacy. We urge the judiciary to respond with a clear understanding of the dangers of technology and a strict interpretation of the Bill of Rights.

If the judiciary does its job, we believe that the Bill of Rights provides sufficient protection for the people from the government and from corporate incursions on the right of privacy. The following specific protections should come under the scope of the Bill of Rights if it is interpreted correctly. If, however, the judiciary fails to fulfill its obligations, further steps by the people may be required to guarantee the right of privacy of information by instituting protections like the following criteria.

- [illegible]

Come to the CPP session on data banks

10



In the continuing inquiry into the uses and misuses of computer technology, CPP is presenting the following article by Ruth Beinart, a member of Metropolitan Council on Housing, an independent NYC organization struggling for tenants' rights. CPP itself will present a paper on computers and housing at the SJCC. Comments are welcome.

COMPUTERS SERVE THE LANDLORDS

Computers are the latest weapon in the continuing war waged by landlords against tenants in the City of New York. The machines were brought into the battle by amendments to the Rent Control Law passed last summer. These amendments first imposed a series of rent increases -- up to 15% -- in August, 1970. The next round of increases -- 7.5% yearly -- will begin in January, 1972, after the computers do their dirty work.

The new increases will be based on computerized Base Rents, which will be calculated for every one of the 1.3 million rent-controlled apartments in the city, using information supplied by the landlords on: total building rent roll, taxes, operating and maintenance expenses and a vacancy and collection loss factor. The landlord will be guaranteed a minimum profit of 8.5% on the equalized assessed valuation (approx. market value) of the building, not on his actual investment which is usually much lower.

The landlords themselves will supply information on operating and maintenance expenses, and if tenants' experience is any guide, the landlords are not known to be particularly truthful. Tenants have found that landlords can get oil supplier companies, elevator repairers, painters, etc. to pad their bills to back up large maintenance expenses without fear of prosecution. The City is accepting the landlords' figures without verification from the tenants. A form does not even exist for tenants' to contest possible inflation of expenses.

As an example of potential increases in rent, the City's own study has determined that for a 42 year old building, 48 apartments, average maintenance, the Base Rent per room will go from \$30 to \$48. Thus, for a 5 room apartment the rent will increase from \$150/month to \$240/month.

On the above example, the tenant will pay a 7.5% increase per year starting from the current of \$150/month until the Base Rent of \$240/month is reached. However a re-evaluation of the Base Rent will occur every two years, in all likelihood raising the Base Rent. Thus, it is possible, even probable, that the tenant will pay a 7.5% increase per year for the duration of tenancy. Furthermore, the rent of a vacated apartment jumps to the Base Rent for a new tenant. Using the above case, if the landlord can harass the tenant out of the apartment, the rent for a new tenant will be \$240. It really amounts to vacancy decontrol, something the landlords have wanted for a long time.

There are supposed to be provisions in the law to make the landlords spend the rent increases on increased maintenance, but the provisions are weak, and if enforcement of the 1970 amendments is an example, the landlords will undoubtedly pocket much of the extra money and continue to cut services and maintenance.

The question comes up: why did the Lindsay administration turn to computers in this swindle? Why not just raise rents as it has before? Computer people ought to realize that, to the layman, computers are neutral, holy, not to be argued with, and that's why they are being used. After all, when the Local Rent Office okays a rent hike, the tenants can file an answer, demand a hearing, picket the Rent Office. But, can you do those things to a computer? Go argue with a machine.

When the Base Rents start coming out -- 50, 100, 200% over current rents -- City officials will shrug their shoulders and say, "Sorry, those are the hard facts. The computer says that the landlord can't maintain the building for less rent."

continued from page 11.

This is a swindle of the crassest kind. The computer is being fed biased information -- straight from the landlord -- and the whole thing is based on a false premise anyway, that profits are sacrosanct and come before people.

Met Council rejects this kind of reasoning and says, "People before profits." Met Council charges that the landlords are dishonest, that they have never opened their books to the public, that they make enormous profits, directly and through tax gimmicks, that they cut services, decrease maintenance, and even close up apartments all in the drive to maximize profits.

Met Council is fighting the rent amendments and the computerized rents by supporting a campaign for repeal of the amendments, by rent strikes and other means.

Ruth Beinart
Met Council on Housing
2 West 31st St
NYC 10001

.....

LETTERS

Sirs:

I'd like to join the ranks of those people who want to be taken off ~~your~~ mailing list. As an ex-"computer person" who's followed the development of CPP and Interrupt for years, my dismay with the whole venture is quickly ripening into contempt, and last issue's "Letter from the People" along with your predictably doctrinal responses to them finally prompted me to make my move. I think my feelings began to sour when your masthead started listing only the first names of the editors, thus ostensibly shifting responsibility toward the "collective" and away from individual ego trips while in actuality creating a redolence of the crummiest underground newspapers and at the same time comfortably preserving the editors' anonymity. But what bothers me most is CPP's and Interrupt's inbuilt hypocrisy: that its radicalism is espoused by a corps of professionals nearly all of whom work in the computer technology, a technology that exists solely by the leave of the same industrial structure against whose hairy chest Interrupt keeps beating its helpless little fists. What can anyone

conclude but that CPP has the same relationship to "computer people" that Miltown has to pill-heads; it controls the anxiety a little without making it necessary to deal with the source of the problem? As for your readers' complaints about CPP's growing radicalism, what does their point boil down to is not the observation that, just as pill-heads keep needing more and more Miltowns to control their agony, so "computer people" have to say "race" and "oppression" and "women" and "peace" more and more often if their demons, if the pangs of their inbuilt hypocrisy, are to be contained? Not until CPP translates its radicalism from disguised psychopharmacology into a direct coming to grips with that first hypocrisy will Interrupt or its doctrine be any less ridiculous.

Yours sincerely,
Stephen Taylor

Collective response-

The members of the Interrupt collective feel that dropping out of the computer field is perhaps more of a copout than staying in. It is an individual action, and we see greater value in acting together with our fellow workers. Also we feel that there is no "clean" field to work in today. Merely paying taxes supports the war, even if one's work has no military or directly oppressive applications. We must take up the struggle to restructure society wherever we are.

We believe that through collective action change can be brought and we strive to follow that model in both our personal lives and on our jobs. We view our work primarily as an opportunity to organize among our co-workers. Using our workplaces for organizing does help alleviate the anxiety some of us feel about working "in the belly of the beast". More importantly, however, it brings the possibility for the same release from frustration to our co-workers and it strikes directly at the corporation and the social and political structure it supports. When people organize, they cannot as easily be manipulated and exploited. Workplace organizing, moreover, is often the most effective way of reaching people for their jobs are usually the most significant things in their lives.

Peace, brother, and Power!

more letters

Dear CPP,

I believe that now is the time for computer people everywhere to stand up and be counted in the fight not only against the war in Indochina but also against what have to be the related issues of racism, repression, and the reckless use of our natural resources. It is particularly important that we, as computer people, destroy the image held of us by many, that we are apolitical, semi-automata that serve the establishment while embracing it. As you noted in the February issue of Interrupt, many scientists have made their voices heard on these and other matters at the AAAS conference and elsewhere. We can, perhaps, remember the time when scientists, too, were stereotyped as apolitical.

There is one thing that disturbs me somewhat about CPP, however, and that is their notion that only "programmers, systems analysts, machine and keypunch operators" are computer people. It may interest you to know that there exist other computer people for peace. Namely hardware types (like myself), logic designers, customer engineers, field engineers, salesmen (does it boggle your mind to think that a computer salesman could be for peace?), educators, etc. I won't let this mild slight dampen my enthusiasm for the job you're doing. Keep it up.

Peace, Bob

The \$10 enclosed is membership etc money; I'm already listed.

The last Interrupt (14) was by far the best I've seen. I'm particularly glad about the extensive replies to questions and critical letters; it seemed to me that in the past Interrupt expressed an in-group tone typical of too many factional publications. This latest issue dispels that completely. Good work, Interrupt collective!

Pete Kaiser

(Thanks. We try. The biggest help is your communications with us, to tell us what we are doing right or wrong. Write on!)

Computer People for Peace:

We do not believe that a data file like the one indicated in the enclosed letter has a moral right to exist, any

more than a military system which enslaves people to fight in a war which they do not believe in. We believe that CPP ought to have a role in working against developments such as this.

We would appreciate any information which you could collect about the operation of this system as well as any suggestions as what to do about it.

Austin

Calgary Committee on War Immigrants
(The above letter included the following from the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme) Attention:

Windsor-Detroit has a computer check. A test case went through into Detroit with G.I. glasses on and was stopped and held up for 2 hours. His physical description and ID info was wired to San Diego. The U.S. Army wants nation-wide computers in service between each base, central computer and border points by June 1, 1971 to handle all AWOLS and delinquencies.

Give us any info you have on any in your area, please!

Peace, TADP

(Anyone with help for these people, please contact us ...Collective)



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

April 19, 1971

Mr. Ronald W. Pitts
Computer People for Peace
The Dolphin Center
137a West 14th Street
New York, New York 10011

Dear Mr. Pitts:

The Vice President has asked me to thank you for your cordial invitation.

Unfortunately, the Vice President's heavy schedule this spring will make it impossible for him to accept. He regrets that he will not be able to be with you, but I am sure you can understand the many demands on his time.

The Vice President does appreciate your thoughtfulness in inviting him and hopes that your program will be a success.

Sincerely,

John M. Damgard
John M. Damgard
Assistant to the
Vice President

IBM:

Will you still need me

When I'm 64?

Will you still feed me

In twenty years, all of you will be over 40. Most of you will be over 45. You will be in the age bracket where, except in good times, employers will not hire you at all. In good times, you will get the inferior jobs with lower pay, less stability, and in those branches of the field which others do not want to bother with.

Computing is not one of those fields in which one gets into a particular job while young and stays with it until retirement. One reason for this is the realization that staying on one job too long, machine or system, means that one loses the chance of keeping up with current practices, machines and systems. Another is that many jobs use a number of people to set up a system, after which only a few people are needed to maintain it. Under these conditions, one does not accumulate seniority rights or pensions.

The applications of computers have grown phenomenally: until the present Nixon recession (depression) anyone breaking into the field was sure of the availability of jobs. The computer industry, like all others, will reach saturation; and standardization of commercial programs will further reduce the number of jobs. Another factor reducing jobs, currently effective, is that when everyone is employed, employers like software houses like to keep people around for work they hope to get. When people are easy to get, as now, these standby jobs vanish. Another thing that is happening to further reduce jobs is that in the present market, people will take abuse before they quit, and unpaid overtime is being extracted systematically from programming people.

People in the computer field can see what is coming in the current situation of engineers. For twenty years there was a great demand for engineers. Many students were guided into engineering schools, and now the engineer who is out of a job has no place to go. With few exceptions, men over 40 are finding jobs completely unavailable.

When those twenty years in the first sentence of this little paper have passed, a

very few of you will have accumulated money or found secure positions. The rest of you will be competing with younger people who have, in the systems then current, as much or more experience than you.

Further, the abilities required for computer work are not all that rare. Most of the work, (as many of you are aware but few will admit) can be done by bright high school graduates. How much of what you learn in college have you used? Employers are beginning to find this out, and soon will be using it to recruit people for lower wages to compete with you.

What can you do about these facts of life? One thing you can do is organize. Demand premium pay for overtime. Obtain employer contributions for some kind of transferable pension fund. Obtain hiring arrangements so that older workers will at least get their share of work, say something on the order of a hiring hall. Finally, even such arrangements require a struggle to obtain and a continual struggle to maintain, together with a policy of restriction of new admissions.

There is no real long term solution but to change the world! To obtain an organization of the economy in which every person has the right as well as the obligation to work, and is free of the need of begging for a job. In such a world, free of advertising-induced galloping consumption with its ensuing pollution of the environment and continuing degradation of the level of life, all men should be able to live well with today's technology, on twenty hours a week of work, or perhaps more enjoyably on forty hours for six months with six months paid vacation.

The choice is up to today's young people. Do you want to sustain the rat race until you are too old to keep up, or do you want to change the world for your old age and your children? Study political economy and find out where to go. And don't sneer at living Marxism and Maoism but study them.

Cassandra

Come tell us your views on why there is unemployment in the fastest growing industry in the country, how workers rights can be secured, is a union of computer workers needed. The Unemployment and Right to Work session at SJCC is your session. May 20, 9:30.



PEACE NOTES

The demise of the Saigon-U.S. force in Laos was the American "Dien Bien Phu".

Politically the peace movement has totally isolated Nixon and the warmakers from the mainstream of political thinking in the U.S. While in 1965 only a relative handful of communists, socialists, pacifists, and other "subversives" opposed the Vietnam War, today 73% of the U.S. people want the war ended this year (latest Gallup poll).

The actions of April 17-24 give examples of Nixon's isolation.

- A massive demonstration of over 500,000 people converged on Washington D.C. under the central theme: "The immediate, unconditional, total withdrawal of all troops from Indochina". Contingents of labor unions, community groups, gays, blacks, mothers and grandmothers attended the antiwar rally, many for the first time. CPP chartered a bus from New York City. Our attractive blue banner drew many curious onlookers.

- More than one thousand Vietnam veterans electrified the nation with their demonstration in Washington. Their activities included mock "search and destroy missions", testimony before a Senate hearing of the incidents of rape and torture they had witnessed or taken part in in Vietnam and ended when 750 vets marched to the steps of the Capitol, identified themselves and then defiantly threw their service medals and decorations onto the steps.

- A pro-peace, dump-Nixon rally of 15,000 was held in Providence, R.I. Allard Lowenstein, leader of the dump-Johnson campaign four years ago, promised similar rallies all over the country.

- The April 24 antiwar rallies were given official support by the Detroit City Council and the San Francisco central labor council.

- Five likely Democratic Presidential candidates took to television to urge that the President remove all troops from Vietnam by the end of 1971. Included were Sen. Humphrey and Sen. Muskie who were nominated on a pro-war platform in 1968. While many members

continued on page 2.

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